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SUGGESTIONS,
ARISING FROM
THE ABOLITION
OF THE
AFRICAN
SLAVE TRADE,
FOR SUPPLYING THE DEMANDS OF
THE WEST INDIA COLONIES
WITH
AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author having been for many years the Resident at Amboyna and the Molucca Islands, and afterwards Lieutenant Governor of Prince of Wales's Island, and British Agent to the Eastern States, has acquired that practical and local information, which has led to the opinions he now offers to the Public, under the hope that they may possibly prove advantageous to so important and valuable a portion of his Majesty's Dominions as the British West India Colonies.

SUGGESTIONS,

&c. &c.

THE abolition of the African Slave Trade having at length been effected, and the difficulties suggested by many as likely to be thereby created, in preserving a sufficient negro population in the West India islands, without importation, being now to be encountered, any proposition which is calculated to obviate these difficulties, (should the apprehension of them be well founded) as well as generally to benefit those valuable possessions, must be considered at this period of very high importance.

Under this impression, I am induced to lay before the public a plan for preserving

a perpetual supply of labourers in the West India colonies, which, at the same time that it meets the intentions of the legislature in the abolition of the African slave trade, will not endanger the tenure of the West India planters in their present stock of slaves. This plan is founded on the introduction of Chinese labourers, already so successfully employed in the British settlements in the Eastern Seas, into the British colonies in the West Indies. To prove its practicability by an exposition of facts, and to controvert such objections to it as may be adduced, will of course be the principal objects of consideration ; and in order to place the subject in the most distinct point of view, it will be divided into the following heads :

First. Facility of emigration from China.

Second. Review of the places to which the Chinese have hitherto migrated.

Third, Suggestion of a port of rendezvous or central point where the necessary agents may reside to superintend and

give effect to the present undertaking, while in its infancy ; and the line of conduct to be observed by agents employed in encouraging Chinese to extend their migration to the West India islands.

Fourth. Observations upon the means of transporting Chinese to the West India islands, upon the expence attending it, and upon the mode of reimbursement for that expence.

Fifth. General objections considered and answered.

Sixth. Details connected with the accommodation and management of the Chinese when in the West India islands, and the kind of cultivation in which they are best qualified to be employed.

Seventh. Desultory remarks upon the new commerce incident to, and arising out of the present plan.

In discussing these points separately, it will be necessary occasionally to digress.

for the purpose of giving explanations connected with the subject at large. It is also proper to premise, in this place, that I shall avoid involving myself in any discussion of the contradictory opinions, which have been maintained by authorities of great eminence, respecting the genuine national character of the Chinese. It is fair indeed to suppose, that this character may vary according to the views and habits induced by emigration; at all events the result of these controversies does not affect the present enquiry, and under this impression, I shall be guided entirely by the facts which have passed under my own immediate observation, during a residence of many years in those islands of the Eastern Seas, through which the emigrant Chinese have scattered themselves so diffusely as to form, at the present day, the principal, if not the only class of agricultural labourers.

Facility of Emigration from China.

It is a well ascertained fact, that the practice of emigration is contrary to the old and fundamental laws of the Chinese

empire. Hence has arisen the generally received opinion, that this practice is actually at variance with the wishes and commands of its government, a doctrine which, we have every reason to believe, is founded as far as regards one sex, but erroneous with respect to the other.

It will not, I believe, be disputed, that the government of China has afforded the most striking proofs ever since Europeans have had an opportunity of observing its policy, of a remarkable vigilance and strictness in enforcing its regulations. It is equally certain, that from no country does so extensive and so constant an emigration take place as from China.

If the supposition therefore, that emigration is contrary to the views and wishes of the Chinese government be well founded, its actual extent and continuance can only prevail under the most open defiance of its orders, and under a general system of corruption throughout every department of the state. But as vigilance and strict-

ness mark the execution of the Chinese regulations, it is impossible that they can thus be for ever violated with impunity in this one instance. Emigration can in truth only prevail through the connivance of the Chinese government, which may be granted upon the same principle which gives rise to the spirit itself, an excess of population.

In a country like China, where the population has long remained undiminished by wars, by pestilential diseases, or by colonization, its consequent redundancy operates both as a calamity to the people, and as an embarrassment to the government, which may thereby be induced to wink * at a practice, by which a part of its excess is thrown off into other countries.

* It has been stated by a gentleman of great authority and high in public office in China, that “ the excessive population of the Chinese empire, occasioning in an unfavourable season, all the horrors of a famine, might naturally be supposed to induce the government of that country to connive at a limited emigration, which would tend to the desirable object of enabling the country to meet with more certainty, by its average produce, the consumption of its inhabitants, *though the established prejudices against foreign connections may continue to prevent an open avowal of their approbation.*

This striking feature of the policy of the Chinese government is further exemplified by the ease with which the captains of ships engage Chinese sailors at Canton, the facility with which Captain Meares, some years ago, procured colonists at Canton for the distant settlement of Nootka Sound*, the indifference manifested by the Chinese government to their countrymen massacred at Batavia†, by the knowledge

* I can not at present put my hand upon the official papers connected with Captain Meares's proceedings, but it is a generally known fact, that he engaged numbers of Chinese to quit their country and to proceed with him from Canton to Nootka Sound, with the intention of forming an establishment in that distant region.

† *Extract and substance of the account, as given in Starovrinus's Voyages.*

In the year 1740, the number of Chinese who resorted to Batavia was so great that several of them could not find employment. The Dutch counsellor Vanimhof, in consequence proposed that every Chinaman who could not prove that he had an honest livelihood should be seized and transported to Ceylon, there to be employed in mining or other labour, for the service of the Dutch East India Company. The officers charged with the execution of the above order, seized and confined all ranks of Chinese, and liberated them only on paying large sums of money. This infamous proceeding led to a belief that those who were unable to pay, would be tortured and put to death. Self-preservation induced many to resist the violence of the soldiery and under officers of government.

we possess that two ships from Macao engaged numbers of Chinese in the year 1804 to proceed to Bencoolen, without any

On a sudden and unexpectedly, an instantaneous cry of murder and horror resounded through the town, and the most dismal scene of barbarity and rapine presented itself on all sides. All the Chinese without distinction, men, women, and children, were put to the sword; neither pregnant women nor sucking infants, were spared by these relentless assassins. The prisoners in chains, about a hundred in number, were at the same time slaughtered like sheep. European citizens, to whom some of the wealthy Chinese had fled for safety, violating every principle of humanity and morality, delivered them up to their sanguinary pursuers, and embezzled the property confided to them. In short, all the Chinese, guilty and innocent, were exterminated! Whence did the barbarous order by which they suffered, emanate? Here a veil has industriously been drawn, and the truth will probably never be known with certainty. The governor general, Valkenier, and his brother-in-law, Helvetius, were accused by the public voice, of directing the massacre, but it was never proved upon them. It is remarkable, that when Valkenier was afterwards condemned to imprisonment for life, at Batavia, among the numerous charges brought against him for mal-administration during his government, no notice was taken of his presumed instrumentality in this dreadful massacre. Much apprehension, however, was entertained that this occurrence would excite the indignation of the Emperor of China, and deputies were accordingly sent to him in the following year to apologise for the measure.

These deputies were agreeably surprised, on finding, that the emperor calmly answered, that *he was little solicitous for the fate of his unworthy subjects, who, in the pursuit of lucre, had quitted their country and abandoned the tombs of their ancestors!*

interruption, and last year to Prince of Wales's Island and Bengal, on their way to Trinidad.

These are circumstances manifestly indicative of the disposition of the Chinese government, but the strongest of all proofs of their connivance at the emigration of one sex is, that while from China proper, as well as from Tonquin, and Cochin China, Cambodia, Siam and Ava, the emigration of their male subjects does extensively take place, yet that the prohibition against the emigration of females, is enforced under such restrictions and penalties as are never eluded.

This singular fact is established upon the evidence of the oldest inhabitants of the Eastern Islands, and is corroborated by daily observations there ; for although male Chinese are extremely numerous at Prince of Wales's Island, and in all the countries on the Eastern side of the Bay of Bengal, yet in no part do we find females of that nation. It is true that there are a few Siamese women at Quedah and its environs, but they are the remains or descen-

dants of those who fled from their country, when overrun, about forty years ago, by the Birmans.

The causes of the indirect concurrence of the Chinese government in the emigration of males, and the punctuality with which the laws against emigration are enforced in the case of the females, are subjects of speculation; but it is not within the scope of the present undertaking to enquire unto this apparent paradox, or to attempt to discover whether in usage, in religious prejudices, or in caprice, such absurd and discordant principles have originated.

It is then an indisputable fact that many hundred thousands of males have already emigrated from China, and that many thousands continue to emigrate annually. I can therefore see no material obstacle to be encountered, whilst the government of China continues to be administered as it is at present, in persuading large bodies of their male inhabitants to emigrate, and numbers of those who

have already settled in the Eastern Islands, to extend their migration, and to establish themselves in our West India Islands, if adequate advantages be held out to them in the first instance, and their confidence in us be permanently secured by the fulfilment of our promises.

I am aware it will be said, that these observations, while they prove a facility in engaging male Chinese, present a serious difficulty in procuring females, which may be advanced against the probable success of the present plan.

But, as the Chinese have no religious prejudices which obstruct their marrying the women of any country to which they migrate, and as this consideration has never yet been an impediment to their migration to the most distant parts of the world, even to countries where colonies were to be first formed, and a population established from the surrounding states—as they are indifferent about the colour or condition of the females they cohabit with—as they willingly submit to the law which

enacts, that the offspring shall follow the condition of the mother, and as the Chinese are prohibited by their own laws (which are punctually enforced in this instance), from introducing females of any other country, or their offspring, into China, when we draw our inferences, not from visionary theories, but from these well-established facts, and weigh them with the accounts of the numberless women of different complexions with which the West India Islands abound; we are warranted in the assumption that the difficulties which this objection naturally presents at first are by no means insuperable. Besides, although the females of China never accompany the other sex on foreign expeditions, the same prejudice does not extend to the other countries, from whence Chinese may be procured. Those who have intermarried with Malays and various descriptions of half casts, may easily be prevailed upon to carry their wives and families along with them, and if combined with these circumstances, we contemplate the wonderful checks to population in the East Indies and in China itself, produc-

ed by the most inhuman sacrifices, and crimes originating in the prejudices of religious frenzy and fanaticism, and when we learn from experience and observation, that even these destructive usages are not sufficient to counteract population; we may safely agree in a determination which is founded on such facts, that the supplies of females from the colonies where Chinese have already settled, combined with the women of colour always to be found in the West India Islands, can not fail, in a reasonable period of time, to produce an extended population*.

Review of the places to which the Chinese have hitherto migrated.

Having endeavored to establish the facility of emigration from China, as well as the invariable tendency of the Chinese to create a resident population in foreign countries,

* This circumstance affords us an additional motive for engaging Chinese who have already emigrated, in preference to those who have never quitted their country, and it at the same time gives fresh importance to the object of establishing a convenient rendezvous in the centre of the islands where emigrants at present reside, which points will be more particularly adverted to hereafter.

I shall proceed to mark more distinctly the extent of the regions to which they have emigrated, and to suggest some convenient situation in that circle for establishing a rendezvous, from whence they may extend their migration to the West India Islands.

The usual emigrations of Chinese extend from about 25 degrees north to 12 degrees south latitude, and from 90 to 145 degrees east longitude. In this space are included the numberless large and small islands which agreeably to the distinction of geographers, form the great Eastern Archipelago. The most distant places whereat Chinese have permanently settled (for they have partially migrated to all quarters of Europe and of India), are from 30 to 40 degrees removed from China, such as Timor, Banda, Java, Prince of Wales's Island, &c,

They have visited New Guinea and New Holland, and from the proximity of the latter place to the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, and from various obvious

reasons connected with its climate, soil, and peculiarly favorable circumstances to the exertions of industrious settlers, there can be no doubt of their colonizing there ere long, if permitted so to do by government.

There are a few Chinese at Bengal and Madras; but these places being abundantly peopled by native husbandmen and artificers, possessing all the advantages of local experience, and who can subsist upon less even than the Chinese themselves require, they have not met with sufficient encouragement to settle there in large bodies. In the Eastern Islands, on the contrary, where there is neither abundance of native population nor a spirit of industry in the aboriginal inhabitants, the Chinese have multiplied wonderfully, and grown rich upon a soil which afforded their predecessors scarcely a subsistence. Upon the same principle, therefore, if the Chinese be much more adroit and industrious in husbandry and handicrafts than the present laborers in the West India Islands, if they can live on the same or

nearly the same allowance and kind, of food ; and if the climate of those islands from a similitude of temperature be congenial to the natives of the southern provinces of the Chinese empire, the success of their emigration to the West India Colonies, may within a reasonable period be safely calculated upon.

Suggestion of a port of rendezvous or central point where the necessary agents reside to superintend and give effect to the present undertaking, while in its infancy ; and the line of conduct to be observed by agents employed in encouraging Chinese to extend their migration to the West India Islands.

In order to facilitate that emigration so far beyond the present boundaries, it becomes a necessary preliminary step to fix upon some convenient port of rendezvous. For this purpose Prince of Wales's Island appears the most central situation in the East Indies ; it is the most easy of ingress ; and egress to all parts of the world in all monsoons, and 15,000 Chinese are already settled there, and keep up a constant intercourse with their native country.

At all events that spot may be assumed as the fittest point of rendezvous. No loss of time in the passage of either Indian or European vessels would be occasioned by their touching at that island. I have been informed indeed that the India-men which passed through the Straits of Malacca in the year 1796-7, made a better passage home than they generally do through the Straits of Sunda, and as the equipment of the Chinese for the West India Islands might be completely effected among their countrymen at Prince of Wales's Island, it would have a wonderfully good operation on the first adventurers.

We now come to the consideration of the measures which may be employed by agents, with the best effect in preparing the way, for carrying the plan into execution. Upon this essential point, it is scarcely necessary to observe, that the success of all undertakings of so novel a nature as the present, must in a great measure depend; it will indeed on every account be essential to dwell at some length upon the

details connected with this branch of the subject.

Secrecy, or rather circumspection, within the empire of China itself appears to be necessary, in as much as the project ought not to be made a matter of *public negotiation between the two states*, because, as I have already observed, although the Chinese government connive at, they may never openly countenance, a spirit of emigration ; but in all other respects, and at all other places, the very nature of the service (if conducted upon a scale calculated to yield immediate advantage) precludes the possibility of secrecy ; and if it did not, a candid avowal of the objects of government is infinitely more likely to insure the success of the measure, than the pursuance of a conduct so much at variance with the character which we have hitherto established at the different settlements where Chinese emigrants at present reside. A British agent cannot proceed in any considerable degree, to forward the objects of his mission among those individuals with whom he may be treating,

without attracting the attention of the community at large wherever he may be stationed. Secrecy, therefore, or rather the attempt at secrecy, is likely to create a distrust in the Chinese emigrants, which is, in truth that, against which it is most necessary to guard : whilst a candid declaration of our intentions is calculated to produce the same success, which has hitherto attended European exertions, to introduce a Chinese population at Prince of Wales's Island, Malacca, Batavia, the Moluccas, and other eastern settlements. It is therefore proposed to divide the method of procuring Chinese emigrants into two heads ; first, with respect to those to be obtained at China, and secondly, with respect to those who are to be engaged at the different ports of the Eastern Archipelago. In the first place, it will be advisable to follow, as much as possible, the mode that has heretofore been practised in peopling European, and Malay settlements, and as far as regards the supply from China itself, the agency of the persons employed may be confined to the obtaining emigrants by the indirect means of ships and junks, which

are continually navigating between Canton and the proposed port of rendezvous.!

The deputation of any *accredited agent to China*, or the having recourse to any mysterious proceedings in the Chinese dominions, would create suspicion, and certainly occasion obstacles to be thrown in the way by the inferior officers of police, if it were only, in order to give a plea for bribes ; whereas, if the ordinary custom of procuring Chinese be persevered in, the usual system of connivance at emigration will be observed by the officers of the Chinese government.

In the second place, that is at Prince of Wales's Island, or at any other part not subject to the Chinese government, but where an extensive population may give reason to hope for a successful attempt to procure emigrants for the West India Islands, it will be proper to signify in a frank manner the nature and extent of the aim of the British government, and to state openly that we wish to encourage Chinese cultivators, and artificers to settle in the West India Islands,

in the same manner as is customary in other colonies under our government; but that as they are more distant than those places to which they have been in the habits of emigrating, indulgences of a more extensive nature will be granted to them, as an encouragement to their industry and spirit of enterprize. It would not be advisable to shew even any particular anxiety on the occasion, as it is of the utmost importance that not the least degree of suspicion should be created in the minds of the Chinese, or indeed of any other nation, as to the justice, candour and integrity of our intentions in every part of the present novel undertaking.

In suggesting the proper encouragement to be held out to the Chinese, in order to induce them to embark the more readily in this enterprize, the means used to procure Chinese at Prince of Wales's Island, when it was first established as a British port, may be adopted under modifications, and restrictions suitable to the West Indies. By circular letters transmitted through the different neighbouring coun-

tries, the Chinese, who might be inclined to settle at Prince of Wales's Island, were promised the free exercise of their religion and customs; employment as labourers at six Spanish dollars, as artisans, at 12 to 15 dollars per month: small lots of land were also given to the most industrious, together with partial aids towards cultivating those lands. These encouragements were continued until the population increased to about 3,000 men; since that period the Chinese have experienced a rapid progress in their numbers and capital, independently of the further exertions of government.

Prince of Wales's Island, it is true, presented some facilities which the present plan does not hold out: there was a new city to be reared, an active commerce to engage in, and an easy and regular correspondence with the mother country. But though the West India Islands may not afford these immediate incitements to enterprize, they will offer other advantages, such as perfect security of persons and property. a flourishing cultivation established, and abundance of capital, which

objects may perhaps be considered still more necessary than the others, I have just mentioned, to encourage and reconcile a change of situation.

Upon a review of all the foregoing circumstances, it appears to be the most advisable line of conduct for the agent, while he is employed in directly obtaining emigrants from China through the means of junk owners, and of the captains of the numberless English, Portuguese, and other ships, which, in navigating to and from China, invariably touch at Prince of Wales's Island, to be directly collecting others from the Eastern Islands where they have already settled, of whom I have the firmest conviction, that vast numbers not only of the new emigrants, but of those who are now residing at Malacca, Rhio, Borneo, and other stations, will upon encouragement cheerfully embark for the West Indies. The Chinese who are to take the lead in this plan and to communicate with the British agents as responsible men, should be carefully selected at China, or at some of the

Eastern Islands, be conversant with the British character, speak English, and have very liberal allowances. They should be sent as passengers in the ships on which their brethren embark ; but it is not necessary that they should act in the stations they are intended to fill, until their arrival at Prince of Wales's Island, or at their ulterior destination. The principal men may be comprized in one captain and three elders, two writers, and one steward for every 500 labourers.

The foregoing arrangement is the best that suggests itself to my judgment for procuring male emigrants adequate to any demand, and as there can be no doubt of the Chinese procuring a sufficient number of females for maintaining the population, by the means already mentioned*, any defi-

* It is taken for granted, upon reference to very intelligent West India planters, that there can be no room to doubt the practicability of procuring females in the proportion of one to ten emigrants, and that the same number may be obtained progressively as the Chinese arrive. This supply, together with the females who will accompany the other sex from the Eastern Islands will, it is presumed, be at least equal to the number of men who will become householders. and form the basis of a

ciency in the population and cultivation will soon be remedied, and the necessity of employing African slaves at all in our West India possessions will be gradually superseded.

Observations upon the means of transporting Chinese to the West India Islands, upon the expence attending it, and upon the mode of reimbursement for that expence.

With regard to the transportation, victualling, and accommodation of Chinese colonists, it is sufficiently obvious from the preceding remarks, that it will be wholly unnecessary to take any precautions until the Chinese have assembled at Prince of Wales's Island. Custom has rendered the equipment for that part of the voyage too familiar to require any distinct enquiry; but with reference to the voyage from the port of rendezvous to the West India Islands, the ships engaged for this purpose should be large enough to convey 500 men each.

resident population, which (as I before observed that the Chinese are prohibited by their own laws from introducing the females of any other country into China), will rapidly en-

They should receive at Prince of Wales's Island the Chinese, their provisions and water for the passage, and it appears to be a proper precaution, that the first ships should be provided with twelve months extra supply of rice, salt, oil, tea, and arrack, five bags of rice for each man per annum, and the usual allowance of other articles *, will be fully sufficient ; it is further desirable that such provisions as may be laid in and shipped for the consumption of the Chinese settlers should be purchased by persons of their own country, properly superintended, for which supply it is elsewhere remarked that Prince of Wales's Island will afford every necessary facility. That each ship ought to carry twelve months stock for the consumption of the passengers, after their debarkation will appear necessary, if we consider that the Chinese will meet no middle class of inhabitants in our West India Islands, consequently they may not find provisions fitted for such a

* The articles of provisions to which the Chinese are most accustomed, are rice, arrack, yams, salt fish, dried shrimps, tobacco, tea and sugar, and no substitute that we can offer will be so grateful to them.

class, and if they do, what may be procurable will perhaps not be suited to their habits. By taking provisions and necessities along with them they will at once be enabled to commence as a middle class, and become immediately reconciled to their new habitation.

Each ship should likewise carry a small investment of coarse china ware, china paper, writing utensils, hats, shoes, and nankeen, and other china articles, which should be sold to the settlers on moderate terms ; and if artisans be required, they should be furnished with their own implements. This equipment may perhaps occasion an extra disbursement not foreseen, but as the Chinese will be obliged to pay for what they want, as issued, either in cash or by labour, as will hereafter be more distinctly explained, the first advance will be the only inconvenience *, and in order to

* It is only *at first* that it will be necessary to take precautions of this nature, for the plan being once fairly adopted, every necessary precaution will of course be taken by the parties interested. Rice and salt are obtained on easy terms from America. Yams, cocos and other vegetable productions,

diminish this expence as soon as possible, an ample stock of swine to breed from, and an abundant supply of all kinds of seeds and roots most used by the Chinese*, should be immediately sent to the islands destined for their reception.

The Chinese should have comfortable accommodations on board ship, and as China and the Eastern Islands abound with hogs (a favourite food of the Chinese), a sufficient quantity should be put on board, to admit of their having a fresh meal once a week, as well in order to prevent the scurvy, as to encourage them to embark. They have not those religious prejudices that render the natives of India so troublesome on board ship.

The rapid success of population as connected with comfort on the passage, and health when in the West Indies, will depend in a great measure on the attention paid

well known to the Chinese are raised in great abundance in all the West Indies Islands; and rum, instead of arrack, is a staple article.

* Radishes and mustard-seed should form a principal part.

to the foregoing details of equipment. It should therefore be put under a controul in which the most perfect confidence may be reposed.

Emigrants have heretofore left China The expence. principally in junks* clearing out from one port of that country to another, foreign trade being ostensibly prohibited by edicts. Such emigrants pawn their persons to the owners or captains of the junks for a passage and victuals, to the amount of twenty Spanish dollars, or four pounds sterling, which they borrow on arriving at their destination, from relations, or from the cultivators whom they engage to work for, and repay by monthly instalments or deductions from their wages, amounting to two dollars, or 10s. a month.

This kind of negotiation is now grown into a regular system of trade. Chinese have also left their country in European

* Country vessels, carrying sometimes from 800 to 1000 men.

vessels, as sailors, artificers, &c. and in various other ways.

It is not reasonable to suppose that all the facilities which the junks afford in colonizing the Eastern Islands, will present themselves at once to the British agents, or can be made immediately applicable to the success of the present scheme, as it will require time to give notoriety to the port of rendezvous, to establish the routine, and draw the attention of junk owners to this undertaking; but it appears advisable that this mode of supply, which has been so long adopted, should be considered as one of the capital resources for us to depend upon, when a more regular trade shall have familiarized or rendered the new plan more generally known.

In the mean time, the captains of ships who have long been accustomed to recruit their crews with Chinese sailors, and to convey Chinese passengers to various parts without meeting with any obstacles, may be directed to engage as many as they

can conveniently embark, for each ship, on the most economical terms, and to land them at the port of rendezvous.*

* It is observed by the same high authority in China, to which I have elsewhere had occasion to refer, “ that the practice of recruiting in China with sailors of that nation, adopted by the Honourable Company’s ships, when a deficiency of hands in time of war, or other exigency happens to require it, is now known to be attended with so little risk or difficulty, that without any previous application on the part of the commanders, our ships are frequently met and hailed in passing through the Bocca Tigris, by Chinese vessels full of sailors in quest of employment, or hire, in any ships outward bound. The vast multitudes of Chinese, who in the occupation of fishermen devote themselves to a sea life, and ply in all directions on the coast, renders it easy at all times to find men suited to the service that is required on such occasions.”

N. B. It is a matter of no consequence whether the Chinese are engaged as sailors or settlers in the first instance, for as sailors shipped at Canton daily land at Prince of Wales’s Island, and all the eastern countries, and *as they invariably embark with the ultimate view, and eagerly embrace the very first opportunity of becoming settlers*, no difficulty is to be apprehended in effecting the exchange.

It is justly remarked by Mr. Macquin, who was lately employed in procuring Chinese for Trinidad, that “ it is well known that scarce a Portuguese vessel leaves Macao, or a country ship sails from Whampoa, which does not take away numbers of the inhabitants, both as working seamen, and as passengers to Batavia, Malacca, Prince of Wales’s Island, Calcutta,

The expences of shipping, conveying, and victualling emigrants from China to Prince of Wales's Island, will be about 20 Spanish dollars each. I estimate the expence from Prince of Wales's Island to the West Indies, at double that sum, so that the whole may amount to 60 Spanish dollars per man. This expence must be defrayed in the first instance by those who undertake the speculation, who may again look to be reimbursed by monthly instalments or deductions as abovementioned, for the advances they may make to the new settlers, or the whole debt may be liquidated by a fresh advance from the planters for whom the Chinese may engage to work. Every

Goa, &c. &c. and these men, when once established in any of the English or Dutch settlements, either as mechanics or common labourers, almost always take wives or concubines from amongst the natives of the country, whose descendants intermarry amongst themselves, always preserving most religiously their original language, manners, and general habits ; so much so, that one whose grandfather was born in Batavia or Malacca, is not to be distinguished from a native of Canton."

These observations being highly corroborative of the feasibility and advantage of the plan, although rather misplaced, the submitting them to the public may be considered excusable.

agreement ought of course to be made with the knowledge and under the sanction of government, and be formally registered in an office for that purpose, with a view to preclude the possibility of injury to the new settlers.

If the planters should agree to pay the whole, or part of the expence of transport, (which a knowledge of his own interest may induce him to do) it is obvious that he would expect in consideration of such an advance, that articles of agreement should be entered into for a definite term of service on the part of the Chinese, according to the practice now in use with respect to white artificers, such as carpenters, masons, &c. who go from Scotland and other parts to the West India Islands. This is but a fair and reasonable expectation, and would not only cheerfully be acceded to by the Chinese, but as holding out a certainty to them, and being what they are invariably accustomed to, would be an additional inducement to them to become reconciled to the new abode.

A Chinaman's wages at the places to which they at present migrate, are six Spanish dollars, or one pound ten shillings a month, if he find himself in every thing ; and four Spanish dollars, or one pound a month, if he be * victualled by the master of the plantation.

As to the pay of the Chinese on their first arrival in the West India Islands, this must of course become the subject of agreement also between them and the planters. Many useful hints might be suggested upon this point, but the one upon which it appears necessary to lay the principal stress at present is, that the price agreed upon, instead of being fixed by a reference to the customary price of labour at Prince of Wales's Island, and the other eastern settlements, or to the customary

* In Jamaica and in other of the Islands it is customary to allow every slave to cultivate a piece of land from which he supports his family and himself. The same practice might be adopted with great convenience and ease to both parties in the case of the Chinese. He would then raise the sort of food most agreeable to himself, the planter would be relieved from considerable trouble if not expence, and a thousand causes of dispute prevented.

price of labour in the West India Islands, should be as liberal as *circumstances will admit*. The relative price of labour in the East and West India Islands is so very considerable (being in the proportion of one to three cheaper in the former), as to admit the planter, by steering a middle course, to exercise his liberality without deviating from the principles of a just economy. In short, this important point should be decided upon the basis of reciprocity ; for it is equally evident, that while every strong inducement should be held out to the Chinese to embark in the plan proposed, the greatest possible encouragement should be given to the planter, to tempt him to make the experiment.*

* The above suggestions on the mode of reimbursement for the transportation of the Chinese, however feasible, do not preclude the British government, or individuals, if they think proper, from granting *extraordinary* indulgences to the Chinese emigrants, and affording them their passage for some years free of expence. I have considered it to be my duty to submit the mode of conducting the plan in the most economical manner, more especially as the practice referred to, while it will obviate considerable expence, is sanctioned by custom established upwards of two centuries ago, and has never been deviated from.

It is scarcely necessary to remark, that the first expence of this great undertaking should be met either by government, or a powerful association of planters, or both joined. The risk is perhaps too great to be encountered by any individual, however liberal and adventurous, without the assistance of the legislature or the public. When the project is fairly tried and well established, the spirit of trade, under the authority, and subject to the regulations of an act of parliament, will soon open every necessary intercourse between the port of rendezvous in India and the West India Islands, by the way of London, of America, and various other channels; by which intercourse, the settlers may be furnished with merchandize and necessaries suitable to their established habits of life, and facilities may be afforded, when their term of service is over, or their inclination may lead them to return to China.

The principal view of this, and indeed every observation, is to shew that the plan may be undertaken with rational hopes of success, and that fairly introduced by

the liberal and well timed assistance of the legislature, a population to any extent will be progressively formed from the natural course of events, independently of the exertions of government.

General objections considered and answered.

Every new and extraordinary measure is open to certain objections, and from various motives will give rise to discussion.—As objections have been started against the one now proposed, by some under whose consideration it has been already brought, it is just to state them to the public, with such answers as appear best calculated to obviate them.

It has been suggested that other nations will endeavour, upon this undertaking, to asperse the British character, and to rouse the jealousy and indignation of the Chinese government. This object has been in a great measure answered in a preceding part of this tract, to which therefore it appears only necessary to add, that so long as the British government do not send ac-

credited agents, for the express purpose of negotiating with the government of China, the declarations of other powers will be of no avail. It has been for a long period of time, the practice of all foreign nations, and particularly of our neighbours the Dutch (whose general system of policy in India is constructed upon these narrow and selfish grounds) to calumniate the British character with all the virulence of envy and disappointment; but their insinuations and calumnies have long ago produced all the effect of which they were capable. They have proved unavailing, and the British name now stands too high to be injured in the estimation of the native powers by any efforts of our European rivals.*

So far indeed from being dissatisfied, it

* This opinion is corroborated by the same high authority in China, to which I have so often considered it my duty to refer. "From every analogy however, from which an inference may be drawn, and from the opinion I am led to form of the character of the Chinese, I am certainly impelled to conclude, that no injury could accrue from a judicious execution of the plan, *as far, at least, as our interests and connexions with the Chinese empire are concerned,*"

is fair to conclude from the singular policy of the Chinese government already alluded to, that though prejudice may prevent an open avowal of their consent, they will in reality rejoice at the circumstance of a new vent's being opened to the empire, for throwing off a proportion of its present excessive population, notwithstanding all the comparatively trivial drains to the Eastern Islands.

It may be imagined that the distance between the West India Islands from the present seats of the Chinese, may prove an obstacle to the measure, and that although the Chinese have readily migrated to the Eastern Islands, they would be averse from venturing across the great Indian and Southern oceans. It is in proof, however, that no undertaking is too arduous for the poorer Chinaman, where he sees the probable prospect of gain, or of a melioration of the wretched fate he experiences in his native country.*

* *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, tom 16, page 394.—
I will tell you a fact, which may appear to be a paradox, but is nevertheless strictly true. It is that the richest and most flour-

It is indeed the nature of man, when pressed by want, to desire at all hazards a change of situation, and all distant difficulties yield to those which are present.

rishing empire of the world, is, notwithstanding, in one sense, the poorest and most miserable of all. The country, however extensive and fertile it may be, is not sufficient to support its inhabitants. *Four times as much territory would be necessary to place them at their ease.* In Canton alone there is, without exaggeration, more than a million of souls, and in a town three or four leagues distant, a still greater number. Who then can count the inhabitants of this province? But what is this to the whole empire, which contains fifteen great provinces, all equally peopled. To how many millions would such a calculation amount. *A third part of this infinite population would hardly find sufficient rice to support itself properly.* It is well known that extreme misery impels people to the most dreadful excesses. A spectator in China who examines things closely will not be surprised, that *mothers destroy, or expose many of their children, that parents sell their daughters for a trifle, that the people should be interested; and that there should be such a number of robbers;* the surprise is that nothing still more dreadful should happen, and that in the times of famine, which are here but too frequent, millions of people should perish with hunger, without having recourse to those dreadful extremities of which we read examples in the histories of Europe.

It cannot be said in China as in Europe, that the poor are idle, and might gain a subsistence if they would work. The labours and efforts of these poor people are beyond conception. *A Chinese will pass whole days in digging the earth, sometimes up to his knees in water, and in the evening is happy to eat a little spoonful of rice and to drink the insipid water in which it was boiled!* This is all that they have in general.

The Chinese emigrants consist of the poorest and most destitute classes of inhabitants, totally unaccustomed to reason upon relative distances, or indeed upon any other relative object than loss or gain. Constantly sailing with the monsoon, they can only make one voyage in a year, and it will be matter of no great importance to them whether they arrive at their destination in two, three, or four months. It is probable too that they may reach the West Indies in good sailing vessels almost as soon as some of the Eastern settlements, in their own ill constructed junks, which are frequently delayed by the intricacy of navigation and danger of pirates.

But as connected with this point a more solid objection seems to present itself, which should not be passed over in silence. However poor and distressed the class of Chinese who migrate to foreign lands, they never quit their native country without the hope of returning, and that the place they are going to admits of an intercourse with their relations and friends whom they leave behind, to whom they invariably

transmit, as opportunities offer, a certain proportion of their earnings. It is, therefore, proper to direct our attention to the necessity which will exist, from the period of our introducing Chinese labourers into the West Indies, to afford them opportunities of intercourse with their native country, not only with the view of progressively augmenting our population, but for the purpose of affording an indulgence to the settlers which no consideration will ever induce them to forego. At the same time, when we duly consider the numberless indirect channels of communication that are *at present* open between the West India Islands and the East, including China, it will appear that this propensity may be indulged without any material inconvenience, and when we refer to the *new facilities*, which in conformity with the natural spirit of adventure, must result from the success of the first Chinese establishment in the West India Islands, it will perhaps be admitted that this difficulty will be obviated altogether, or become only a very trivial consideration.

It may further be advanced, in alluding to the hope that Chinese emigrants invariably cherish of returning to their country so soon as their fortunes are made abroad, (an inclination which it would be unjust, as well as impolitic to put any restraint upon) that as the poor emigrants proceeding to the West Indies, will always exceed the number of rich returning, this predilection will not greatly interfere with the increase of population expected. More especially, as fresh emigrants will annually arrive, and as no females will be permitted to accompany the other sex who may return to their country, the loss of a few males can never produce any essential impediment to the general plan.

The leading opinion of a Chinaman consists in the belief that gain is positive good, loss positive evil, unembarrassed by those prejudices which influence the minds of weak and scrupulous people.

These characteristics will preclude many jealousies from the separate relation of free labourers, and slaves working in the same

plantations. As long as a Chinaman gets his pay, food and raiment, he is perfectly indifferent as to his associates in labour. I have been for many years accustomed to see Chinese working promiscuously with Malay, African and Indian slaves in the same plantation. They have the good sense indeed to know, and justly to appreciate the intrinsic blessings of freedom, but they have at the same time the prudence not to sacrifice to that any of the other substantial advantages of life.

We are now to consider this subject in a still more material point of view, that of security. It is objected by some persons, that the Chinese will soon assimilate with the slaves, and become their partizans in case of insurrection. But let it be examined how far they are justified by experience in forming this opinion. No one is ignorant that the Maroons (a free description of negroes) have resided nearly 70 years under the protection of the law in the mountains of Jamaica; they work occasionally as common labourers for hire, and many of them have wives and children

among the slaves, which children (according to the usage of the country) follow the condition of the female—their origin, language, and habits of life, their customs, festivals, funeral solemnities and prejudices are precisely such as belong to the negro slaves, yet the Maroons have never assimilated altogether with the slaves. If in spite of the strongest physical and moral affinities, there has always existed a political distinction arising out of various causes, but most naturally out of the feelings of personal freedom, which has kept the Maroons a separate class of people from the slaves, how much more forcibly does this argument apply in the case of the Chinese, whose habits, language, disposition, and every feeling of their minds, will tend to keep them totally distinct from the Negroes.

It is again a striking fact, that during the late maroon rebellion in Jamaica, not a single slave became faithfully attached to the Maroons, the few that joined in the rebellion having taken every favourable op-

portunity of returning to their proper homes.

With respect to the other islands in the West Indies, it may perhaps be urged, that the spirit of discontent has invariably commenced amongst the people of colour. But to judge of the Chinese character by the habits and conduct of those who have hitherto migrated to other countries, we may reasonably expect that they would be in opposition to the views of insurgents. Their own interest would naturally lead them inseparably to attach themselves to the governing power, however, weak, in confirmation of which, I need only to refer to the various Malay countries, of which Chinese now form the wealthiest, if not the principal part of the population, as they do at Sambas, Mumpawa, Pontiano, Rhio, and other settlements in the East, where that population exceeds 30,000, while the Malay force is not adequate to resist the attack of 50 regular troops; and where, notwithstanding this great disproportion, no single instance exists of

their having attempted to rebel against the government of the country, or by any means to meliorate their conditions, excepting by the quiet pursuit of industrious occupations.

On the other hand it may be objected that the Negro slaves will become discontented with their lot by the comparison of their situation with that of the Chinese free labourers. In answer to which, it will be sufficient to observe, that these consequences have not hitherto flowed from the employment of the free Maroons conjointly with the Negro slaves in those islands, where that practice has hitherto prevailed ; that the character, manners, language and habits of the Chinese, differ so widely from those of the Negroes, that the latter would be much less likely to form comparisons in their case than in that of the Maroons, and that if, after all, insurrection, from whatever cause, among the Negro slaves should take place, the planter might always with certainty depend upon the assistance of

the Chinese labourers, who would thus form a barrier between him and the discontented Negroes*.

Details connected with the accommodation and management of the Chinese when in the West India Islands, and the kind of cultivation in which they are best qualified to be employed.

It will be necessary now to consider the mode of treatment best calculated to secure the attachment of the Chinese when in the West India Islands, and to describe the habits and customs they preserve, though resident in foreign lands, and from which they cannot be weaned, without the risk of

* In support of this expectation, the following circumstance may be cited:—When the Sultan of Jehore equipped an expedition against the Dutch some years ago, for the recovery of the conquest of Malacca, which possession the Portuguese originally wrested from the hands of his ancestors, the Chinese inhabitants became a powerful and efficient militia, without whose faithful services the Dutch resident at Malacca have frequently assured me, that their small garrison must inevitably have been overpowered. The Chinese persevered, until a seasonable reinforcement arrived from Batavia, and dispersed the Sultan's forces.

essential injury to the proposed undertaking.

Temporary huts and storehouses should be prepared for the reception of the first Chinese emigrants, and for their provisions, in a healthy situation, where they can reside until they find masters or employment, and during this period there should be an effectual provision for their maintenance. In the warm latitudes of the West Indies, very humble and moderate habitations will be suitable to these people. The previous arrangement, therefore, for the reception of the Chinese, need not be much more expensive than appears necessary in the case of new imported negroes. As an object however of great moral as well as of political importance, it is proper to repeat in this place, that when European cultivators first engage any of the Chinese emigrants, the agreement ought to be made with the knowledge and under the sanction of government, and be formally registered in an office for that purpose.

At Prince of Wales's Island, and all the eastern settlements, some of the Chinese emigrants on their first arrival receive in consideration of their labour fixed wages, others a certain premium in proportion to the quantity of their labour, or the produce of the soil. The latter plan, which is formed upon regular contracts, has been found the least expensive, inasmuch as it creates a greater excitement to habits of industry in the labourers. In the course of time the most economical and persevering labourers are enabled to become proprietors themselves, *but the great mass of emigrants is composed of monthly or annual labourers in plantations, the property and management of which are vested in others.* As the extent of the migration from China, and from the Eastern Islands would of course be in some degree regulated by the report of those who first return, every facility should be given to a few of the most industrious and deserving becoming proprietors of small lots of land. When they arrive at the means, there can be no more objection to their possessing landed pro-

perty on the islands to the same extent as any other free class of planters.

The Chinese are great speculators in agriculture, take indefatigable pains with their lands, and cultivate them at less expence than almost any other description of people. One man can labour with the hoe two acres and an half in a year. In general they are adepts in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar, arrack, indigo, and silk; they also understand the management of pepper and coffee, and all kinds of tropical productions of the earth. The culture of the tea plant will be well worthy of experiment in the West India Islands; and as the excellence and cheapness of the China sugar, which constitutes one of the principal commodities of that market, is generally allowed, there can be no doubt but some of the emigrants will be enabled, not only to cultivate sugar in the West India Islands to great advantage, but to suggest many useful improvements in the mode of raising and managing that staple article of trade. In short, I might almost venture to affirm, that it will

soon be discovered, that the Chinese manage lands in every respect with an attention and dexterity unexampled in the present cultivation in the West Indies.

But as they will in the outset be utter strangers in a new country, government for a time should extend to them a peculiar degree of protection and encouragement, in order that the report of those who return, may lead to more extensive emigration. This protection should be particularly directed to prevent the headmen from oppressing them, and in order to compensate for little hardships which it will be impossible to obviate altogether, government may refrain from levying any local tax to which the present inhabitants of the West India Islands are liable, until they acquire numbers and capital, when they will be found one of the most production sources of revenue in the West Indies.

A piece of ground must be set apart for their place of worship, and another for their burial ground*. I need scarcely

* I understand that there can be no difficulty, on any plan-

add, that the government must be particularly cautious to prevent any interference in their religious ceremonies, to which some singularities are attached.

A hospital * should also be constructed for their exclusive use, and the captain or chief ought to be held responsible for the care of the sick, poor, and infirm, who have no means of gaining a livelihood by their industry, for they are individually strangers to the feelings of general humanity, and they will pass on totally regardless of the cries of want, or pangs of misery, unless the suffering object be one of their own relations.†

tation to grant them a place of worship and a place of burial for the dead; but to prevent dispute it should be made a part of the stipulation.

* It appears that on every well regulated plantation, a hospital is established under the care of a medical man, for the reception of the sick. Here is at once a comfortable provision in that respect for the accommodation of these people, which may be made the means, under judicious management, of attaching them strongly to their situation. They must however be attended by their own regular physicians, in whose skill they put the greatest faith.

† It would be just and equitable for the purpose of de-

With respect to polity, and the civil and criminal laws which may be most congenial to the Chinese settlers, in criminal matters, the English penal code may be considered as unobjectionable, and as possessing this advantage over the Chinese laws, of rendering “justice in mercy,” a divine principle, which their corrupt and sanguinary courts of justice do not admit to influence their decisions. Their municipal laws ought, however, to be regulated by a due regard to those statutes which time has rendered dear to them, and to the continuance of which, (more especially as we are to be the principal gainers by their emigration), it may be argued, on the broad and liberal basis of reciprocity, that their native and established usage will give them a prescriptive right.

fraying this expence, to farm (as is the case at Penang) the exclusive privilege of selling their favourite meat, (pork) at a certain rate, in order to raise a revenue upon their consumption thereof, adequate to the maintenance of the poor and infirm; and this fund ought to be placed under the immediate superintendence of the captain, subject to the inspection and controul of the government.

The important question of succession to property in China, is founded on different principles from those which govern the English laws of succession, and this and many other points of civil law, which are absolute in their own country, they are particularly tenacious of preserving in the utmost purity. It would be irrelevant to enter into a detail of the numerous variations and distinctions between the English and Chinese laws; I shall content myself merely with observing, that in India the decision of his Majesty's judges is guided in a considerable degree, by the laws of the natives between whom the dispute exists, and I should suppose every man free from prejudice, will concur in the propriety of such a concession, so long as it is not repugnant to equity. Although it may be difficult, if not impracticable, to obtain such information of the Chinese laws as would lead to satisfactory conclusions upon all occasions, still this difficulty ought not to prevent the endeavour to collect the best possible information on the subject; and if insurmountable obstacles at present prevent justice from being ad-

ministered agreeably to the letter, the spirit, and forms of the laws, ought to be adhered to as closely as possible, with a view to reconcile the settlers to their new situation, and thus conciliate their attachment.*

Being accustomed in their own country to a rigid police, they will readily submit to regulations established for preserving peace and good order in a British colony. In short, it may fairly be implied, from the chearful and implicit obedience of the Chinese to the numberless different regulations established in the countries to which they have hitherto migrated, that no diffi-

* I conceive that the Chinese immediately on their arrival in the West India Islands, would be liable to be affected by regulations made from time to time by the legislature, applicable to the peculiar circumstances of their situation. It is therefore submitted, that a code should, in the first instance, be prepared under the direction of his Majesty's Ministers, for the due regulation of this description of settlers, by and under the advice of commissioners chosen from among such persons as are conversant with the usages of the Chinese empire, and the municipal institutions of the West India Islands, with a strong recommendation from government, that it should be adopted by the Colonial Assemblies.

culty can possibly arise upon this score in the West India Islands.*

* I am not aware that any positive information has yet been received respecting those Chinese who were lately sent to Trinidad, but I do not think any fair conclusion could as yet be drawn respecting the general success of the present plan from that experiment.

Opinions, founded upon the experience of two centuries, during which period the Chinese have, without a single exception, proved themselves to be the most peaceable settlers, and most industrious labourers in every part to which they have migrated, cannot rationally be upset or shaken by superficial observation, or the inadequate trial of a few months.

It is evident that the greatest difficulty was surmounted in their willingness to embark for Trinidad ; for once there, it being admitted that the climate and food cannot be otherwise than congenial to the natives of the southern provinces of the Chinese empire, I can see no physical nor moral cause to doubt their success in a reasonable period of time, if skilfully managed in the first instance, and if their confidence in us be secured by the fulfilment of our promises.

I am aware that there are various and great prejudices to be surmounted, before these people will be employed with confidence and alacrity by the inhabitants of the West India Islands, but the removal of these difficulties time only can effect.

I would also remark in this place, that the Island of Jamaica, or some other of the old and long established British Colonies, would perhaps be a fitter place for the reception of the first Chinese settlers than Trinidad, for in the former they would find a flourishing cultivation actually existing, British planters of ex-

Desultory Remarks upon the new commerce incident to, and arising out of the present plan.

The adoption of the plan proposed would undoubtedly open great additional channels of commerce, which might prove eminently beneficial to the mother country, and not less so to the East India Company, under regulations judiciously adapted to the circumstances under which it would arise. Not possessing myself that local experience, without which it is impossible to enter with sufficient precision into the

tensive fortunes and corresponding liberality, and every comfort that a rich and well regulated society can afford. In the latter place, I apprehend that they would meet principally with adventurers—a society, for the most part composed of a motley group of foreigners, who might defeat the great object in view by the want of concert and unanimity in the mode of treating the new settlers. And further, if the experiment of introducing them at Trinidad should not hitherto have proved completely successful, it might be attributed to this leading circumstance, that the government and not individuals have conducted the details of their operations, for it is universally admitted, though the fostering hand of government should be extended to remove the first obstacles to any great national enterprize, that by individuals alone, stimulated by the hopes of private advantage, and the fear of absolute ruin, the minuter details ought to be carried into effect.

actual sources of commerce which it would open, I must refer to the information of those whose long habits of intimacy with the trade carried on between India, China, the Philippine Islands, and South America, will best enable them to suggest the advantages, likely to result from the intercourse between those countries, which this measure will naturally create, contenting myself with throwing out the general observation, that a very extensive and lucrative trade has long been driven by the Americans and Spaniards, in carrying the productions and manufactures of China and India to America, and clandestinely to our West India Islands, which trade, by some well connected plan of co-operation between his Majesty's ministers and the Court of Directors, might easily be made to pass into our hands, and thus produce extensive advantages to the country at large. Even a participation or efficient controul over those valuable branches of commerce, now sources of wealth to the Americans and Spaniards would surely, as a matter of national policy prove a most desirable acquisition to Great Britain and

her Indian possessions ; but the operation of the present plan will not stop here. We shall be enabled at all times to undersell our rivals, to beat them out of all competition, and to command this most profitable and extensive trade. I have already said, perhaps, more upon this point than I was entitled to do from my knowledge of facts. It is not in my sphere, nor will I presume to appreciate all the bearings and relations of a question of so much importance to a great commercial nation, although the great outline is easy to be traced, and the advantages to be derived from it, open and clear to a mind at all informed upon subjects of this nature.

I have now stated every circumstance that has occurred to me, as calculated to throw light upon the present subject of enquiry, and have only to add in submitting these observations to the consideration of the public, that I by no means wish it to be understood that I unconditionally pledge myself to the successful issue of the undertaking ; for it is evident that to pronounce so decided an opinion,

it would require to be intimately acquainted, not only with the various interests of the East, but with those also of the West India Islands. I have the satisfaction, however, to be able to affirm, that while there is every reason which evidence can give us in favour of the feasibility of the plan, so far as the East is concerned, it has been considered by several gentlemen of great information and abilities, possessing considerable landed property in the West Indies, that any difficulties in that part of the world will in the course of time give way.

In ordinary cases to divert the course of a long established system, enjoyed during a series of years by prescriptive right, presents the appearance of much difficulty. In the present instance, however, it is clear, that we have every rational prospect of success, without any obstacles, which may not by perseverance be encountered and removed. Temporary sacrifices of little importance may be requisite, which will not admit of a moment's consideration, when opposed to the magnitude of the objects which the

scheme embraces. But in taking leave of the subject, let me here repeat, that as the individual is not alone to reap the benefits of this measure ; so on this account, as well as on many others too obvious to be mentioned, he ought not to be called upon to meet alone the difficulties and expense which it involves. Under all the circumstances of the abolition of the Slave Trade, the government, in justice to the planters, will be induced to take up this matter heartily; they will weigh all the advantages and inconveniences to which the measure is liable ; they will duly appreciate the value of an object of such apparent national importance, and determine, upon general principles, whether or not this plan shall deserve the decided support of the legislature.

F I N I S.